

Alicia C. Matthews, Director  
Cable Television Division  
Dept of Telecommunications & Energy  
One South Station  
Boston, MA 02110



Dear Ms. Matthews,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Stow Massachusetts in response to your request dated August 23, 2006 for additional information in regards to the topic of Competitive Franchising Rulemaking (CTV 06-1).

**1. Who initially reviews cable license applications ...**

The Stow Cable Advisory Committee initially reviews any request for a cable license in the Town of Stow and makes a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen who make a final response. This review starts within 2 weeks (next committee meeting) of receiving such a request.

**2. Has the municipality established a Cable Advisory Committee ...**

Yes. A 5-member committee is established. It meets only occasionally to review current situations and any new business as needed. Members have no specific term but continue to serve until they retire or the Selectmen appoints a replacement. Any resident of Stow can become a member if an opening exists. Any information for the current cable provider or any cable company wishing to apply for a license would have that information sent to the chairman of the cable committee who could call a meeting of the full committee within 2 days but more likely schedule one within 2 weeks to review and act on such material.

**3. Does the municipality have a city solicitor ...**

Although the Town does retain the services of a Town Counsel, it has not been necessary in the past for such counsel's services to be needed for Cable Committee business, including its recent license renewal with Comcast. Any proposal submitted to the Town in regards to current or new cable services would first be reviewed by the Committee at its next meeting, and if necessary, recommendations are made to the Board of Selectmen for any actions that might be needed to be taken by the Town.

**4. Is there time when Selectmen lack authority to execute contracts...**

In general, if a request requires the payment of money, the Selectmen must obtain the approval of the Town Meeting. Otherwise, the Town Meeting has authorized the Board of Selectmen to act on its behalf. This is so for any authorizing of cable services within the Town.

**5. State if parts of Town's current licensing process could be streamlined...**

**Yes. If the new cable company requests a license essentially the same as the current license with a Town's current video cable provider, the approval could probably be done within 90 days (more comfortable within 120 to 180 days). But if any requested license terms are substantially different, requiring negotiations, then that time should not be limited; otherwise the requesting company would have a major unfair advantage in such negotiations.**

**6. Provide timeline of all steps necessary to identify the Town's needs ...**

- **Receive a proposal; assemble a cable committee meeting (2-3 weeks).**
- **Determine if request is for identical license to current one (3-5 weeks).**
- **If same, pass on to Selectmen for discussion and approval (3-4 weeks)**
- **Hold public mtg to present license and get public discussion (3 weeks)**
- **Selectmen approve or disapprove the license request (2 weeks).**
- **If not the same, negotiate to find acceptable terms (time undetermined).**

**7. State date the municipality last conducted a review of its cable needs...**

**September of 2002. This was a public meeting and only 1 resident appeared and his interests were only in the content on the channels, an area the Town has no control. It appears that a full review of cable-related needs and interests are not necessary within this Town. The intervals shown in question 6 above would not change with or without such a meeting.**

**8. For Towns that begun licensing process with Verizon, provide timeline...**

- **July 12 — Town of Stow invites Verizon to discuss requesting a cable license with the Town.**
- **Aug 1 — Verizon meets with Cable Committee and makes request of start license procedure.**
- **Aug 9 — Letter to DTE indicating license negotiations with Verizon has started.**
- **Aug 9 — Letter to DTE requesting the use of local advertising and a reduced response time.**
- **Aug 18 — Stow received approval from DTE of its requested procedure modifications.**
- **Sept 1 — Waiting for request from Verizon, no further action has been taken.**



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